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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 08 USNATO 000268

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SUBJECT: NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL READOUT - JULY 30, 2008

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Classified By: CDA Richard G. Olson, Jr., for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C/NF) Summary from the NAC Meeting:

-- Afghanistan: Briefing on his recent visit to Afghanistan, NATO Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer expressed concerns with suggestions by Afghan President Karzai that upcoming elections may not be held due to security concerns in the south and east of the country. The SYG stressed the need for timely free and fair elections in Afghanistan and urged all Allies to present this message to Afghan interlocutors; Allies expressed support for Afghan elections. The Chairman of the Military Committee (CMC) gave a briefing on Freedom of Movement in Afghanistan, noting its importance in both the military and political realms. The operations brief reported the highest level of Opposing Militant Forces (OMF) activity seen to date, but stressed that this was likely a by-product of ISAF/ANSF/CF operations tempo. ISAF remains focused on the border areas in RC-East and Helmand Province in RC-South. PermReps provided updates on various ministerial visits to Afghanistan, large monetary contributions for infrastructure/ANA training/voter registration, the movement of a U.S. infantry Battalion from RC-East to RC-South, and a Belgian decision for an F-16 deployment to Kandahar.

-- Balkans: The SYG highlighted the July 25 UN Security Council meeting on Kosovo, mentioning that a majority of the Security Council members were in favor of the UN SYG's plan to reconfigure UNMIK. He also informed the NAC that the EU officially launched day one of its 120-day transition period on Saturday, July 26, which implies that the EULEX mission should be fully deployed by the end of November. Admiral Moreno informed PermReps that UNMIK was proceeding to reestablish customs infrastructure at Gates 1 and 31 in northern Kosovo with support from KFOR, adding that so far there had been no reaction from K-Serbs. With the third revision of the Balkans operations plan still on the table, the UK, seconded by Italy, asked the CMC to inform Council of what he needed in terms of political guidance. Turkey voiced

its support, but stated that what is needed is "a certain clarity on what can be provided" in terms of guidance.

-- Africa - Support to the AU: Allies did not seek to reach consensus to task NMA's to look into how NATO could address Somali piracy although the U.S. pushed for it. They will keep the issue under review, while recognizing that the EU also is working on this issue. The SYG noted NATO should be prepared to respond to future requests from international organizations, noting the potential role of two Standing NATO Maritime Groups, though for now there is no consensus on developing an anti-piracy mission for them. While expressing some concerns about a recent equipment request from AMISOM, Allies agreed with the SYG that NATO should work with the organization to find "NATO relevant" areas where the Alliance could provide support.

-- Iraq: No discussion.

-- Response to Terrorism: The SYG offered his condolences to Turkey in response to the recent terrorist attacks in Istanbul. The Turkish PermRep expressed his nation's gratitude for the solidarity and support shown by its NATO Allies.

-- Accommodating New Requirements in the New NATO HQ: Most Allies voiced support for spending funds to design an additional short wing for the new NATO headquarters project in order to accommodate future expansion needs. They noted that designing an additional short wing now was prudent long-term planning since it could save money and time in the long run without committing the Alliance at this point to any construction obligations. Germany, France, and Spain were

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the only members that voiced objections to this position, arguing that changing the original headquarters design would only incur unnecessary costs and time delays. Since project lead Belgium, as host country, offered to postpone the decision timeline for a last time until late September, the NAC will review the issue at a TBD date again in September.

-- Statements on Political Subjects: The French PermRep announced several recent actions in the EU, including the tightening of sanctions on Zimbabwe and EU support for Serbia in the wake of the formation of a government and the arrest of Radovan Karadzic.

-- AOB: The SYG outlined his proposed format for the October Defense Ministerial in Budapest. He urged Allies to consult their capitals and submit inputs so that planning could proceed.

END SUMMARY.

Afghanistan

12. (C/NF) SYG BRIEFS RECENT TRIP TO AFGHANISTAN -- The SYG briefed the NAC on his and SACEUR's July 23-24 visit to Afghanistan. He detailed his meetings with President Karzai, Speaker Qanooni, COMISAF and UNAMA SRSG Deputy Chris Alexander. The SYG discussed the preoccupation of President Karzai with Pakistan and the current situation in the tribal areas. He said Karzai was not in the mood to consider constructive engagement with Pakistan, but the SYG urged him to do so. The SYG had argued that Afghanistan and Pakistan face a common threat and Pakistan must be part of any solution. He agreed with Karzai on the need to raise international awareness and said NATO would seek to engage Pakistan via political and military channels. Karzai linked Pakistan to the security situation in Afghanistan and the prospects for proceeding with elections per the current schedule. The SYG said it was his impression that Karzai was testing the waters regarding a delay in the elections should

his Pashtun vote not be ensured. The SYG urged that all in the international community act to discourage a delay and stressed the need for free and fair elections; Allies generally supported this view. On a related note, the SYG said that COMISAF and Deputy SRSR Alexander had said that elections would likely be difficult, but possible to carry out, on schedule. In a subsequent meeting, Speaker Qanooni suggested that a Loya Jirga may need to replace elections due to the poor security situation in the East and South. The SYG said it should be discouraged and stressed that the NATO position should be that elections take place in a timely and transparent manner.

13. (C/NF) CMC COMMENTS ON OPERATIONS UPDATE -- The CMC led off the operations briefing with a discussion of Freedom of Movement (FoM) as the most important issue to the populace and overall security. He noted that this was a clear example of political-military-civil cooperation and a key military task for ISAF. He said that the lack of sufficient ground forces limits FOM for civilians, ANSF and ISAF. He noted increased targeting of road networks Opposing Militant Forces (OMF). In particular, he noted that the attempts by OMF to isolate cities by blocking the Ring Road had had an OMF-desired negative impact on the public perception of security. He said that this propaganda effect brings the competence of the GoIRA into question.

14. (C/NF) PAKISTAN -- Admiral Moreno briefed that the situation along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border remains tense due to tribal clashes and engagements with the Taliban. Clashes between pro- and anti-government groups are frequent,

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where militias not showing allegiance to the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) have reportedly been eliminated by the TTP. Pakistani Taliban leader Baitullah Mehsud had allegedly prepared a hit list of around 300 high-profile Pakistani targets, and their "elimination" seems to have already begun.

Additionally, Admiral Moreno briefed the issues of Islamabad negotiating with militants in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Moreno also said that the Pakistani Frontier Corps units deployed to the Tribal Areas were to be reorganized, with some outposts slated to discontinue their activity. He said that the likely reasons for this move were numerous defections and troops' reluctance to effectively address the cross-border incursions.

15. (C/NF) ISAF SECURITY SITUATION -- Admiral Moreno noted that OMF activity was at the highest levels ever seen, particularly in RC-South and RC-West. He stressed, however, that was likely a by-product of the high ISAF/ANSF/CF operations tempo. In RC-Capital, threat reporting indicates that OMF are intending to conduct further attacks on high profile targets. In RC-North, activity is mainly in the Kunduz-Baghlan corridor and in Badakhshan Province, with incidents primarily criminal in nature, predominantly relating to narcotics and weapons smuggling. In RC-West, OMF activity increased significantly in the past week, focused primarily in Farah Province. The rise of activity can be attributed to ISAF Operations, and OMF attacks mainly against ANSF along main supply roads. In RC-South, a significant increase in activity occurred likely as a result of ISAF/ANSF operations in Helmand and Kandahar Provinces. OMF activity continues to be defensive and harassing in nature, with a continued focus on IEDs. Helmand experienced a high level of OMF kinetic activity, with OMF conducting ambushes against static ISAF/ANSF locations and harassing attacks, combined with IEDs. Kandahar and Zabul provinces experienced a moderate level of OMF kinetic activity. An increase in asymmetric attacks including Vehicle Borne and Suicide IEDs can be expected, as OMF attempt to demonstrate that they remain a threat. In RC-East, OMF continue conducting indirect fire Attacks against operating bases along the Pakistani border. OMF are expected to continue to conduct strikes against fixed locations and to attempt to limit ANSF/ISAF FOM by placing IEDs along main roads. The use of

intimidation letters, threats of assassination, and strikes on District Centers will also remain high in an attempt to undermine the Afghan government.

¶16. (C/NF) ISAF OPERATIONS -- Admiral Moreno said that ISAF operations were focused in RC-South and RC-East, where ISAF continues to conduct counter IED and direct fire attacks in an effort to ensure FoM for convoys in Kandahar and Helmand Provinces. In RC-Central, there were a number of IED discoveries in Musahi District as a result of increasing local collaboration. In RC-North, a checkpoint along the Ring Road in Samangan Province and the permanent presence by ISAF/ANSF improved security, limited smuggling, and hindered OMF FoM. In RC-West, Operation SHAMSHIR continues to improve FoM on routes into Bala Morghab District, however, it is unlikely that the bridge will open prior to September 15. In RC-South there continues to be a high level of activity in central Kandahar and northern Helmand, with IED strikes, finds, and direct fire attacks. Notably, the July 13 suicide IED attack in the Deh Rawod bazaar killed 15 civilians and wounded 30, including the Assistant District Chief of Police. In RC-East, ISAF indirect fire caused two incidents of civilian casualties, which were quickly investigated and reported to the Afghan Government and the local media, preventing negative exploitation. Also, on July 26, the ANSF successfully defended the Spera District Centre in Khowst Province from OMF attacks. ISAF provided support with UAVs and attack helicopters, and a significant number of OMF were reported killed.

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¶17. (C/NF) DISCUSSION -- The SYG noted that NATO's role in ISAF should be both military and political, using the example of a recent visit to set up an ISAF military liaison team in Islamabad. Additionally, he noted that UAE support efforts were certified and only participation and financial agreements needed signing to formally recognize the UAE as a non-NATO troop contributor to ISAF.

¶18. (C/NF) Canadian PermRep McRae emphasized the importance of ground troops to the reconstruction effort. He also relayed that Canadian Foreign Minister Emerson visited Kabul and visited Karzai and COMISAF. FM Emerson stressed that elections must proceed on schedule and in a transparent manner, a notion with which Karzai agreed. He noted COMISAF's view that there would be no satisfactory solution in ISAF, until the Pakistan border disputes are resolved. FM Emerson was told important developments in the reconciliation movement were forthcoming, but offered no specific information.

¶19. (C/NF) The Netherlands representative noted the emphasis on FoM and stated that the FoM of troops (both ISAF and ANSF) as well as the population greatly affects the Afghan public's perception of security. The Spanish Representative announced the July 25 Government of Spain and Afghanistan agreement to sponsor the ANA in Baghdis Province, with a 40 million euro allowance from the Spanish MoD for infrastructure, equipment and training.

¶10. (C/NF) Thanking the SYG for his condolences on the loss of another UK soldier in Afghanistan, the UK PermRep noted that the current UK-deployed lead battalion had now suffered 10 killed in action. He also highlighted the essential need for "strong and energetic" governors, such as the new governor in Helmand Province, who is pushing FoM and good governance as his main issues. Additionally, Governor Mangal is getting into the information campaign, presented a counter narcotic plan to President Karzai (with 10 million USD backing) and signed up ANA and ANP leaders in the province to support the plan. He also noted the shift in Helmand from asymmetrical attacks to larger, conventional attacks. He also noted the apparent squabbling between the criminal and ideological factions of the OMF, as well as the recent arrest of the "shadow governor" of Helmand in Quetta, and three

other OMF mullah leaders killed in the last two weeks. He noted the situation is difficult, but progress is being made. He also noted the Afghan Weekly report discussion on ANA end strength and the requirement for OMLTs. Lastly, he promised to circulate materials for future discussion on Pakistan, particularly looking into the politics of why the Frontier Corps are changing and whether we should have a NATO liaison in Islamabad.

¶11. (C/NF) The German representative discussed the recent visit to Afghanistan by Foreign Minister Steinmeier, where he traveled to other provinces to prove the German government supports reconstruction throughout Afghanistan. In Herat, a German water purification system will ensure 80 percent of the inhabitants to have access to clean water. In Kabul, the FM held political talks about the Paris conference and Afghan-Pakistan relations. He also introduced a 6 million euro program for voter registration. Finally, he stated that Afghanistan needs to work on good governance to fight against corruption; the heavy cost in Afghanistan of Pakistani actions in the border regions; and the lack of border security.

¶12. (C/NF) U.S. Charge Olson announced the arrival of the 2-2 Infantry battalion in Kandahar, which will be fully operational by August 1. This unit was moved from RC-East to RC-South and will fill the "border security" CJSOR shortfall.

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The Canadian PermRep heartily thanked the U.S. for this move.

¶13. (C/NF) The Belgian representative announced the July 25 Council of Ministers Agreement in Principle to deploy four F-16s and 100 personnel to Kandahar for 6 months, renewable with parliamentary approval. The Danish representative noted that the OMF are striking where the ANA is not, which leads to a feeling of instability, and is a critical issue for ISAF. The Hungarian PermRep echoed support for Afghan elections and that the differences with Pakistan should not be an excuse for delays. He requested a future brief on a comprehensive assessment of OMF leadership and capabilities, since he feels the "picture is contradictory" with more coordinated attacks by the OMF lately. The CMC promised the brief after the break, and tasked SHAPE to provide an answer to the UK question on ANA size.

¶14. (C/NF) The SYG wrapped up this portion of the NAC by relaying his impressions after talking to NGOs in Afghanistan. He was struck by how little they knew about NATO, but also at how everyday Afghans and their nascent civil society hold NATO responsible for everything that happens in Afghanistan.

Balkans

¶15. (C/NF) The SYG highlighted the July 25 UN Security Council meeting on Kosovo where SRSG for Kosovo, Zannier, Serbian Foreign Minister Jeremic, and the new Kosovo Foreign Minister, Hyseni, addressed the Council. The SYG also mentioned that a majority of the Security Council members were in favor of the UN SYG's plan to reconfigure UNMIK. The SYG also informed the NAC that the EU officially launched day one of its 120-day transition period on Saturday, July 26, starting a clock which theoretically should lead to the full deployment of the EULEX mission by the end of November. He used this last point to emphasize that NATO and KFOR would continue to follow developments to ensure there is no policing gap. Picking up on the remark, the CMC noted the importance of getting clear political guidance to NATO's military authorities and stressed repeatedly during follow-on interventions that the clock was ticking. Admiral Moreno provided the Balkans situational and operational update, saying that the tense situation on the ground due to the presence of parallel institutions and minor interethnic

incidents is having a cumulative effect and could heighten tensions. He informed PermReps that UNMIK is proceeding to reestablish customs infrastructure at Gates 1 and 31 in northern Kosovo with support from KFOR and noted that so far there has been no reaction from K-Serbs. The UK, with support from Italy, agreed with the CMC on the need for providing political guidance. Noting that revision 3 of the Balkans operations plan is still on the table, the UK asked the CMC to inform Council of what he needed in terms of guidance. In response, the CMC said he would be in touch and work with the SYG, but noted again that the clock was ticking. Turkey came in to also note its support, but stated that what is needed is "certain clarity" on what can be provided in terms of political guidance. The SYG concluded by saying that he intends to work this issue with the military authorities through the CMC and promised that he would revisit this issue with the Council "sooner rather than later."

Africa - Support to the AU

¶16. (C/NF) PIRACY -- The SYG referenced the informal discussion on Somali piracy at the July 1 PermRep Lunch,

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saying the matter "warrants urgent attention" from the international community. He pointed out that since July 1 World Food Program (WFP) ships, which support over two million Somalis, have gone unescorted in Somalia's dangerous coastal waters. The SYG noted that NATO was in close touch with the EU on this and that the EU was considering an ESDP mission. He said that it would likely "take some time" before the EU reaches a decision and thus NATO should stand ready. The SYG did not suggest tasking NMA's to develop options at this time. Charge Olson noted we would have supported such a tasking (below).

¶17. (C/NF) The SYG said that the NATO Shipping Center at Northwood cooperates with the International Maritime Organization to improve maritime situational awareness in the region, but at no time had NATO requested that Allied ships operating in the area escort WFP ships. He noted there is a lot going on in the region "in the EU framework" and also mentioned CTF-150, currently under Canadian Command. He then observed that NATO's Standing Maritime Group (SNMG) will be transiting the region in the fall, having the potential to embarrass NATO if there is no anti-piracy policy in place.

¶18. (C/NF) The SYG repeatedly stressed that the EU is in the lead, but cautioned that the WFP's needs cannot be ignored. To emphasize this last point, he noted the two relevant UN Security Council Resolutions. He proposed keeping the issue under review, adding that the NAC should come back to it "if and when necessary."

¶19. (C/NF) The CMC confirmed that the SNMG II will sail through the region on an exercise from October) December 2008, but also noted that the SNMG I is expected to conduct a longer exercise from March) September 2009 which will sail through the area on its way to Australia. The Italian PermRep agreed that the EU is in the lead, but pointed out that 21 of 26 NATO Allies are also members of the WFP, which makes the matter "our business" as well. He supported the SYG's proposal to keep the matter under review and do whatever is necessary. Charge Olson noted that the USG would have supported a tasking to NMA's to develop options on piracy, and cautioned that the piracy issue could sneak up on NATO if the Alliance is not prepared, noting the timing of the upcoming SNMG exercises. Charge Olson also expressed hope that informal contacts with other organizations would be maintained.

¶20. (C/NF) The SYG closed the exchange on piracy, confirming that the NAC would keep the matter under review. He also

added the point that bilateral engagement is also an option to ensure safe passage of WFP ships, noting that the legal challenges and rules of engagement for a NATO maritime operation "are not all that easy" and could take time.

¶21. (C/NF) AMISOM REQUEST -- The SYG referenced the recent SACEUR letter requesting political guidance on the AU's request for a variety of equipment to help the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) deploy its headquarters from Nairobi to Mogadishu. The SYG reminded everyone of the current support NATO is providing AMISOM (strategic airlift and two subject matter experts), and pointed out that this most recent request from AMISOM illustrates the AU's positive perception of NATO. However, the SYG expressed reticence over aspects of the equipment request which he described as either questionable or perhaps better purchased by others. He expressed concern in particular over sensitive military equipment (such as the requested IED jammers) which would require substantial end use monitoring and oversight, adding that such jammers also are needed in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the SYG noted the request comes at a time when NATO is developing closer ties with the AU, and that in the positive spirit of this closer cooperation, NATO should do

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more than just say no. He suggested that the SML0 in Addis could explore more "NATO relevant" and "quick win" areas in which to support AMISOM. The CMC agreed with the SYG's assessment and line of action.

¶22. (C/NF) The Netherlands, Italy, UK, Portugal, Germany and the U.S. concurred with the SYG's suggestion. The representatives pointed towards keeping the door open to the AU's request, the need to avoid duplication and potential funding modalities for future support to AMISOM, with the UK indicating that the SLMO could play an important role in developing other areas of NATO support to AMISOM.

¶23. (C/NF) The SYG suggested the AMISOM note verbale may have gone to other organizations as well. He said he will let AU Commission Chairperson Jean Ping know about the discussions at the NAC regarding the AMISOM request.

Response to Terrorism

¶24. (C/NF) The SYG expressed his condolences for the recent terrorist attack in Istanbul. In response, the Turkish PermRep thanked the SYG for his public statement of support and solidarity on behalf of the Alliance and said that it was well received in Ankara.

Accommodating New Requirements in the New NATO HQ

¶25. (C/NF) The SYG announced that the Deputy Permanent Representative Headquarters Board recommended retaining Building "Z" (a remote building on the current NATO HQ site) in order to accommodate NATO's resident agencies, thus saving the Alliance several million euros. He noted that the board could not reach consensus on planning for, but not constructing, an additional short wing to the new headquarters building, and warned that this could create space constraints should more nations be invited into the Alliance in the future.

¶26. (C/NF) The Canadian PermRep urged the Alliance to consider design of an additional short and long wing in the headquarters project since both will most likely be required for future expansion. He noted that by spending the money to design the new wings now, NATO could lock in lower prices without having to commit itself to construction. He warned Allies that delaying a decision on the design of the wings would only lead to much higher costs in the future.

¶27. (C/NF) The German PermRep dissented from the Canadian position, arguing that any changes to the headquarters plan now would only add unnecessary costs and time to the project.

He said that the decision to retain Building "Z" will fully meet NATO's current requirements and that it would be unwise to design expansion space now when the extent of NATO's future enlargement is unknown. He warned of the possibility of spending money to design and build additional space that would remain empty, thus incurring even more costs. He suggested that the decision to design extra wings could always be made at a future date when the need was more apparent.

¶28. (C/NF) The Belgian PermRep voiced his concern that the current headquarters design would not accommodate the Alliance's future needs and urged member nations to reach a decision on whether to design an additional short and/or long wing before the end of September. He said that the end of September was a "red line" and any changes made after that date would add on extra costs and time to the headquarters

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project.

¶29. (C/NF) The UK PermRep disagreed with the German position on all points and said that the planning argument for an additional short wing was convincing. He noted that contrary to the German argument, NATO could make design alterations now without incurring any significant additional costs or time delays. He warned that if NATO pushed off a decision to the future as the Germans suggested, it would drastically increase the costs of the headquarters project and create more delays. He also emphasized that the issue at hand was simply designing extra space for the future, not committing the Alliance to construction. He urged the Alliance to take a long-term strategic view and recommended that the headquarters board re-examine the issue over the summer.

¶30. (C/NF) The Dutch, Polish, Norwegian, Slovenian, Italian, Bulgarian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, and Hungarian PermReps all supported the Canadian and UK positions to decision an additional short wing for the new headquarters, while the French and Spanish PermReps sided with the German position to avoid making any changes to the current design. The Greek PermRep announced that his government remained undecided.

¶31. (C/NF) Charge Olson expressed the United States' support for designing a short wing, emphasizing that the issue was about proper long-term planning and cost savings and not about committing the Alliance to construction or future enlargement. The SYG closed by saying that the Alliance needed to revisit the issue and work on achieving a consensus before the September deadline noted by Belgium.

Statements on Political Subjects

¶32. (C/NF) The French PermRep reported on recent actions in the EU, including President Sarkozy's statement of solidarity in response to the Istanbul terrorist attacks and Foreign Minister Kouchner's speech to the Council of Ministers on the objectives of France's EU Presidency. She also said that the EU welcomed the creation of a new Serb government and the recent arrest of Radovan Karadzic. She reported that the EU had reinforced sanctions on Zimbabwe in light of election-related violence (Note: the first time in recent memory that France has chosen to raise an Africa issue in the NAC).

AOB

¶33. (C/NF) The SYG urged Allies to provide inputs for the upcoming October Defense Ministerial in Budapest. He recommended that NATO include the usual sessions on operations and transformation as well as a session with its Russian counterpart. He also supported a session on ISAF but questioned the need for a NATO-Ukraine Council, given the already planned Nov. 11-12 NATO-Ukraine high level meeting, or a meeting on KFOR. He urged Allies to consult their capitals and reach consensus on a ministerial format in time for the August 13 NAC meeting.

OLSON